

Office Des  
5/29



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release MAY 28, 1956

FWS GETS NEW REFUGE ON GARRISON RESERVOIR; PLANS MAMMOTH GOOSE RESTORATION PROJECT

The opportunity for the greatest Canada goose restoration program ever undertaken in America is now available in the Fish and Wildlife Service's newest refuge on the Snake Creek Arm of the Garrison Reservoir in North Dakota, the Department of the Interior said today.

Administration of the wildlife on this area, which is approximately 25,000 acres in extent, was assumed by the Fish and Wildlife Service today through the completion of a cooperative agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, with John L. Farley, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, signing for the Service, and Chester R. Davis, Assistant Secretary of the Army, signing for the Corps.

Garrison Reservoir is a unit of the Missouri River flood control plan. It is 210 miles long, 14 miles wide in places, and 200 feet deep when filled. Snake Creek Arm is on the eastern end of the lake, not far from the town of Coleharbor. It is partially separated from the main body of water by a railroad bridge and by U. S. Highway 83.

Under the terms of the agreement the Engineers continue to have primary jurisdiction over the area but will give fullest possible consideration to Service waterfowl management plans in any manipulation of flood waters.

Under a general plan which was accepted last year by the Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State of North Dakota, plans were launched for the State to assume management of the northern half of the area while the Service would manage the southern half for sanctuary and restoration purposes. Both the State and the Service have pledged to work for the restoration of the Canada goose to the fullest extent possible.

In the early days of the last century the Missouri River from near the sources of its tributaries to near what is now the Nebraska-South Dakota line was one of the finest nesting grounds on the North American continent for the Canada goose.

Fish and Wildlife Service officials say that Snake Creek Arm with its numerous islands which are ideal for goose nesting and with its almost unlimited potentialities for waterfowl food offers an exceptional opportunity for the restoration of the Canada goose. These officials declare that their aim is to bring the goose population of the refuge up to the saturation point and that then the geese will go upstream and down and create new nesting areas on the river islands and on favorable places on the shore.

In the past several year 18 new flocks of geese have been started by planting decoy birds in advantageous areas.

Snake Creek Arm will be utilized by other varieties of waterfowl but the Fish and Wildlife Service intends to use it primarily for the Canada goose.

x x x